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AUTHOR Davis, Edward L.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A review of the literature was conducted to identify the current status and direction of the effort to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education. The major data source was the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) collections for the time period between 1960 and 1975. Data was subdivided into four categories: (1) Definition and identification of the disadvantaged student, (2) the legislation concerning disadvantaged students in vocational education, (3) approaches to effectively teaching the disadvantaged in vocational education, and (4) the evaluation of those approaches. The major portion of this paper summarizes the findings in each of the four areas: Definition (13 pages and a 12-item bibliography); Legislation, a listing and brief summary of federal acts (7 pages and a 23-item bibliography); Teaching Approaches (6 pages and an 8-item bibliography); and Evaluation (4 pages and no bibliography). (JT)

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
FOR
THE DISADVANTAGED STUDENT

Prepared by:

Edward L. Davis, Chairman
Donald H. Dalton
Alice M. Clay
Alva H. Bowen
Anthony F. Gergely

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INTRODUCTION

In July, 1975, in an address before EPDA Project Directors, Dr. William F. Pierce, Deputy Commissioner of Occupational and Adult Education of the U.S. Office of Education outlined what he perceived to be the nine critical issues facing vocational education. Dr. Pierce further commented that the approaches to and the emphasis placed on these issues will greatly influence further trends in vocational education.

The southern region of Educational Professional Development Act Awardees chose to use these nine critical issues as the focal point of the Leadership Development Conference which they were sponsoring. Each of the nine universities involved was to examine one of the critical issues and develop a presentation describing the current status and probable future direction of that particular topic.

After examining each of the nine critical issues, the graduate students of the University of Georgia's Division of Vocational Education chose the issues of how to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education as their topic. A committee of students was selected and review of literature was conducted

during the period January through March, 1976. The following is a description of how the review of literature was conducted and its findings.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This review of literature was conducted to identify the current status and direction of the effort to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education.

STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to identify through a review of the literature the current status and direction of the effort to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this review of literature are as follows:

1. To identify the current status and direction of the effort to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education.
2. To define disadvantaged student.
3. To illustrate what traits or characteristics can be identified as unique to disadvantaged students.

4. To review the current status of legislation dealing with the disadvantaged student and vocational education.
5. To identify the approaches presently being used to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education.
6. To evaluate the approaches presently being used to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student through vocational education.

LIMITATIONS

The committee recognizes the following limitations to its review of the literature:

1. The data source was largely limited to material found in ERIC collections.
2. The committee limited its review to selected samplings of the material available.
3. The committee limited its review to a time period between 1960 and 1975.
4. The committee was limited in the time available to conduct its review of the literature.

DESIGN OF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature was conducted within the following framework:

1. After a brief review of literature, an ERIC search was conducted utilizing the following descriptors, each of which was paired with the term "disadvantaged student":
 - A. Vocational Agriculture
 - B. Vocational Education
 - C. Adult Vocational Education
 - D. Agricultural Education
 - E. Business Education
 - F. Cooperative Education
 - G. Distributive Education
 - H. Health Occupations Education
 - I. Occupational Home Economics
 - J. Prevocational Education
 - K. Technical Education
 - L. Trade and Industrial Education
2. The data located through this process was then subdivided into four categories:
 - A. Data dealing with the definition and identification of disadvantaged student
 - B. Data dealing with the legislation concerning disadvantaged students in vocational education

- C. Data dealing with approaches to effectively teaching the disadvantaged student in vocational education
 - D. Data dealing with the evaluation of approaches to effectively teaching the disadvantaged student in vocational education
- 3. A committee member reviewed the data in each of the subcategories and developed a part of the presentation based on this data.
 - 4. The committee met as a whole for the purpose of discussing and tying the various parts together.

The remainder of this paper is devoted to the findings of the committee on each of the four areas outlined above.

DEFINITION AND IDENTIFICATION
OF THE DISADVANTAGED

My task this afternoon is to attempt to present a definition of the elusive labeling category for that group of individuals which we educators are currently terming the disadvantaged. How we arrived at the categorical label of disadvantaged is interesting in and of itself; for example, note the historical precedences for where we are today in the following statement which must have been written by someone attempting to do the same task which I am trying today.

"I used to think I was poor.

Then, they told me I wasn't poor, I was needy.

Then, they told me I wasn't just needy, I was a member of a minority.

Then, they told me it was self-defeating to think of myself as a member of a minority, I was deprived.

Then, they told me deprived was a bad image, I was underprivileged.

Then, they told me underprivileged was over-used, I was disadvantaged.

I still don't have a dime, but ---

I have a great vocabulary."

The professional literature is replete with various definitions of disadvantaged, depending upon the frame of reference from which one is viewing the problem.

The definition of concern to us, the vocational educationally disadvantaged, from the United States Office of Education is as follows:

"Disadvantaged persons means persons who have academic, socioeconomic, or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in vocational education or consumer and homemaking programs designed for persons without such handicaps, and who for that reason require specially designed educational programs or related services. The term includes persons whose needs for such programs or services result from poverty, neglect, delinquency, or cultural or linguistic isolation from the community at large, but does not include physically or mentally handicapped persons unless such persons also suffer from the above handicaps."

Basically, disadvantaged individuals are students who are missing something necessary for successful school

performance. The criteria for successful performance are established by the local school personnel, (this implies that these criteria may be eliminated or modified.)

In most cases disadvantagement is isolated in the school setting and rarely in the individual's community. It results from an atypical or unfamiliar environment which causes restrictions in that person's behavior and adaptability to the situation.

Being disadvantaged is not a permanent status. Given a proper learning environment these disadvantages can be overcome.

Who is disadvantaged? We all are if removed from our social or school structure into one which places unfamiliar restrictions on us.

One of the goals of Vocational Education is to incorporate the educationally disadvantaged into programs and to modify existing programs when necessary so that the Vocational Educational disadvantaged student can be successful and, thus, become a contributing member of society. If we are not successful in incorporating the disadvantaged student into our programs, we will have a situation which Mr. Jim Parham (currently, Director, Department of Human Resources, State of Georgia) has painted vividly in a poignant portrait which I would like to share with you now.

What's it like to be disadvantaged in the United States in 1976? By definition, of course, the disadvantaged are different from the majority in some significant way.

Perhaps most commonly and most importantly, being disadvantaged is having less money than you require to live at the standard Americans believe to be minimal. You don't eat as well, you aren't housed as well, you don't dress as well. You're not doctored as well, legally represented as well, schooled as well, transported as well, informed as well, or entertained as well. You can't stop for snacks or a beer, drop in on a movie, pick up tickets for the Braves, Falcons, or Hawks, buy a toy for the kids, or do a lot of things which most Americans take for granted. You may not even have change for a phone call or bus fare. This sense of deprivation resulting from the inability to consume in a mass media consumer-oriented economy is probably the principal source of embarrassment and insecurity for the poor.

Not only do the poor have less money, but they pay more for the things they need. Food bought in small daily quantities at the corner grocery is more expensive than weekly volume shopping at the supermarket which requires more ready cash. The poor invariably pay more for medication, transportation, housing and clothing. Rent paid by the week, without the protection of a lease, brings less quality

for the money paid. Furniture and appliances purchased at neighborhood outlets on weekly installments usually mean no discount and high interest rates.

No money down means a higher price for a used car, and the odds are great that it will quit running before your payments do. The ordinary risks of sickness, injury, loss of job, or essential repairs create a money crisis of desperate proportions. Life is very uncertain and insecure. You frequently feel that terrible unease in your gut when you must ask (or beg or plead with) some other person to spare you some dreaded indignity such as eviction, garnishment, refusal of further credit, or re-possession.

Being disadvantaged is being uneducated and unsophisticated in a world that places a premium on learning and know-how. It's being ignorant of a whole range of ordinary experiences like never having taken a vacation, never been camping or hiking, never had a birthday party, never been to a play, never dined at a good restaurant, never been on a plane, never been to a museum, never walked on carpeting, never seen a famous person in real life. It's not being able to read and complete the application blank; it's cheating by stealing an application blank and getting someone else to fill it out for you ... then having to pretend that you can read the numbers on the crates you have

to store, afraid all the time you'll goof and get fired. It's not being able to read the sign on the bus or the street marker so you can find your way to the job. It's being a high school graduate who can't spell or write a complete sentence. It's being unable to pass the simplest employment test. It's being embarrassed because other people can't understand what you're trying to say ... and they look at you like they think you're dumb.

Being disadvantaged is being unskilled in a work-world that has good jobs for the trained and qualified ... but the same old dead-ends for the unskilled. It's looking at ten pages of want-ads and not seeing anything for which you're qualified. It's finding out that being a shade-tree mechanic or a jack-leg carpenter is not good enough. It's finding out that maybe school was important after all ... and wondering how can you afford to take time off for training now. It's finding out that you're the last hired and the first fired. It's finding out that your pay check is less than everybody else's on the job.

Being disadvantaged is being uncared for and unloved in a community that is always bragging about how friendly and compassionate it is. It's living alone on a welfare income when you're old and sick ... and never having any company. It's not having anybody at the house when you get

home from first grade classes. It's living in a large family where there's never enough of anything and Mom and Pop are too defeated to care. It's a locked school yard gate, an empty playground, keep-off signs, no-trespassing warnings. It's being buried in a pauper's grave.

Being disadvantaged is having parents who teach you that "getting by" is a safer goal than "getting ahead." It's staying on welfare rather than taking a job you might lose. It's the whole bag of limited horizons ... settling for a job in the mill when you might have gone to college ... working for a wage when you might have had your own business ... being a painter when you could have been an interior decorator . . . a mechanic when you might have been an engineer.

Being disadvantaged is having other people stereotype you . . . to label you . . . to pre-judge you. It's your teacher expecting you to do poorly in school and then being self-satisfied when her prediction is correct. It's your foreman thinking you'll be a problem worker . . . and then patronizing or harassing you until he makes it happen. It's the cop who assumes you're belligerent and beats you to the point. It's all those generalizations that end by declaring: "That's just the way they are" --- those niggers, hunkies, dagos, spicks, kikes, hillbillies, crackers, rednecks,

lintheads, micks --- or whoever the convenient target happens to be. It's being assumed to be shiftless, lazy, irresponsible, promiscuous, sinful --- undeserving and unworthy.

Being disadvantaged is being a member of a minority group in a society highly sensitive to racial or religious differences. It's playing the role of "Negro" or "Jew" or "Indian" or what have you . . . out of habit . . . or fear . . . or because you've done it so much you've come to believe the myth yourself. It's not being free from the confines of the restricting "role". Negroes can't be assertively "uppity" . . . give them an inch and they'll take a mile. None of the minorities should move into our lilly white waspish neighborhoods or get too friendly with our women.

Being disadvantaged is believing that whatever you get in life is what you were pre-destined to get by some higher, unquestionable authority. It's believing it's hopeless to fight city hall. It's believing that the children born to you repeatedly were somehow meant to come and leaving it up to God to provide for them. It's resigning yourself to the fact that your sons will likely get into trouble with the law and your daughters will likely get pregnant. It's believing that whoever makes it is just lucky ... and that someday maybe you'll pick the right number.

Being disadvantaged is hating yourself for being not good enough to make it. It's blaming yourself for all the missed opportunities and trying to escape your hurt pride with alcohol or drugs or literally running away. It's knowing people are going to reject you and rejecting them before they get a chance. It's a chronic depression covering a towering rage that occasionally erupts into a wife-beating, a child abused, an officer assaulted, dishes shattered and families wrecked.

Being disadvantaged is feeling isolated and apart . . . different from and not a real part of the larger world around you. The police can't be depended upon to protect you . . . the welfare lady is more snooper than helper . . . the medical clinic or hospital tries to shunt you away . . . the school is more interested in teacher comforts and hours . . . the neighbors can't be trusted. You're really alone . . . or, at least, that's the way you see it.

Being disadvantaged is not being able to find meanings in life. Why be honest when only the crooks you know are making it? Why be loyal when no company ever valued you? Why be industrious when it leads nowhere? Why not cheat on welfare and unemployment compensation when all the jobs you can get are dead ends?

Being disadvantaged is accepting whatever happens with resignation . . . because you know you don't have the power to do anything about it. The odds are too great . . . the deck is stacked against you. If you're turned down for a job you should have had, you grin and bear it. If your kid is picked up by the police and says he didn't do it, you tell him to be quite and hope for mercy.

Being disadvantaged . . . is feeling that there's no use hoping. Nothing good is going to happen no matter what you do . . . So why try? Why work hard? Why save your money? Why go to school? There'll be no breaks . . . luck is against you. Even if something good happens, it won't last. Tomorrow will be just like yesterday.

So being disadvantaged is a complex, many-faceted condition. The group is a mixed bag --- some more, some less disadvantaged. Our disadvantaged person may be child or adult, male or female, young or old, bright or dull, dependable or undependable. He may be strong or weak, vigorous or apathetic, nice or mean, pretty or ugly, black or white (or yellow, or red, or pink or brown). He may be any combination of these and many other characteristics.

With a few exceptions for religious or ethnic prejudice, the disadvantaged are also poor. Indeed, the almost universal negative effect on one's ability to earn a living

is the most serious, practical result of being disadvantaged. The resulting sense of being deprived and having limited life choices produces fundamentally pessimistic views that are transmitted to the young often enough to give rise to a so-called "culture of poverty". The dynamics of how this transmission of patterns of failure takes place is not well understood, and it seems obvious that intervening variables in the child's environment frequently disrupt and ameliorate the pattern.

LEGISLATION THAT HAS AFFECTED PROGRAMS
FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

This section attempts to deal with the more prominent pieces of legislation that has affected programs for the disadvantaged. Of great importance is the way in which the various states has taken the funds made available from these many Acts and has put them to work for the needy of this country. A bibliography has been supplied at the end of this report for any who desire to do further research on their own into the various aspects of legislation affecting the disadvantaged.

The following are major pieces of legislation that has affected programs for the disadvantaged.

- 1946 - Employment Act - committed the national government to a policy of high employment and economic growth, also dominated manpower policy during the 1950's.
- 1961 - The Area Redevelopment Act-emphasized the stimulation of economic growth and also made provisions for manpower training.
- 1962 - Manpower Development and Training Act-authorized experimental and demonstration projects to test new ideas for aiding seriously disadvantaged people to become workers. This established a nationwide program of occupational training for the unemployed and the underemployed.

1963 - The Vocational Education Act - aimed at providing fresh guidelines and increased funding for vocational education in relation to the regular public education program. Provisions which are pertinent to programming for the disadvantaged are:

1. maintaining, extending, and improving
2. the development of new programs
3. provide part-time employment for needy vocational students
4. service for all persons of all ages in all communities of the state
5. provide for vocational training and retraining that is geared to the labor market (including new occupational fields)

The basic philosophy was that all citizens must have access to education and training of high quality and be realistic in terms of opportunities for gainful employment.

1964 - Economic Opportunity Act - fostered new programs funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. These programs were:

1. Job Corps - provided residential training of youths who might benefit by being placed in vocational boarding schools away from their old less desirable environments.

2. Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) - sought to encourage young people to remain in school by providing part-time work, this also gave them some job experience.

1965 - Vocational Rehabilitation Act - greatly increased federal support for the Vocational Rehabilitation program originally established in 1920 and broadened it from a measure for the physically and mentally handicapped to a program for impairment due to "vocational, educational, cultural, social, environmental, or other factors."

1968 - Vocational Education Amendments - provided monies to the various states to assist them in the following ways:

1. to maintain, extend, and improve existing programs of vocational education
2. to develop new programs of vocational education
3. to provide part-time employment for youths who need the earnings from such employment to continue their vocational training on a full-time basis, so that persons of all ages in all communities of the State--those

in high school, those who have completed or discontinued their formal education and are preparing to enter the labor market, those who have already entered the labor market by a need to upgrade their skills or learn new ones, those with special educational handicaps, and those in post secondary schools--will have ready access to vocational training or retraining which is of high quality, which is realistic in light of actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment, and which is suited to their needs, interest, and ability to benefit from such training.

Guidelines specified at least 25 per centum but no less than 15 per centum of each state's allotment of funds appropriated under section 102 (a) for any fiscal year beginning after June 30, 1969 "shall be used only for the purpose set forth in paragraph (4) (a) of subsection (a)" which reads:

- 4 (a) Vocational Education for persons (other than handicapped persons defined in section 108 (c) who have academic, socio-economic, or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in regular vocational education programs

1972 - Vocational Education Amendments - extended the \$675 million level of authorization for parts B and C of the 1968 Amendments to fiscal years 1973, 1974, and 1975. These extended funds were to help continue the provisions made in the 1968 Amendments which included:

1. Exemplary programs and projects
2. Residential Vocational Schools
3. Consumer and Homemaking Education
4. Cooperative Vocational Education
5. Work-Study Programs
6. Curriculum Development
7. Engagement of a National Advisory Council

1973 - Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) - replaced the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (MDTA) parts A, B, and the Emergency Employment Act of 1971. It's major purpose is to provide the economically disadvantaged, the unemployed and the underemployed with the assistance they need to compete for, secure, and hold jobs challenging their fullest capabilities. This is to be accomplished through new integrated manpower delivery systems designed by prime sponsors, not the federal government. Prime sponsors must develop

the policies, procedures, and practices to be followed. The end result is the decategorization of programs and the design of new approaches to meet local needs.

1974 - The Vocational Education Amendments - provided regulations for implementation of the Vocational Education Act of 1963. Funds under this Act which relate to disadvantaged persons shall be used to foster special educational programs and services designed to enable disadvantaged or handicapped persons to achieve vocational education objectives that would otherwise be beyond their reach as a result of their handicapping condition. These programs and services may take the form of modifications of regular programs, special educational services which are supplementary to regular programs, or special vocational education programs designed only for disadvantaged or handicapped persons.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Other related pieces of legislation were:

- 1963 - The Elementary and Secondary Education Act - authorized special assistance for school districts with high concentrations of school-age children, and support for innovative projects, library and instructional materials and research, and other programs.
- 1963 - The Higher Education Facilities Act -- 1965 - The High Education Act - provided aid for construction and improvement of college facilities and financial assistance to students along with other help.
- 1965 - Public Works and Economic Development Act - provided \$760 million dollars annually in financial grants, loans, and technical assistance to communities and regions of excessive unemployment to aid in the creation of new jobs.
- 1965 - The Appalachian Regional Development Act - established a unique joint federal-state program for economic development in the Appalachian area from Alabama to New York. The Act authorized a \$1.1 billion six-year program.
- 1965 - The Housing and Urban Development Act - established a wide variety of federal assistance to assist in providing housing for low and moderate income families, to aid in urban redevelopment, and to improve living conditions and community facilities.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING DISADVANTAGED

Part of the critical issue of helping the disadvantaged student is the need to deal effectively with the youths in our classes. Some of these youths learn best from the teacher, some learn best through a variety of media, some through a combination of both. Some of these youths learn rapidly, some more slowly.

The problems of the disadvantaged did not develop overnight; therefore, they cannot be solved overnight. To develop a workable program for the disadvantaged, the interrelationship of five factors is important: student, teacher, administration, community, and the physical resources.

It is recognized rather generally that conventional instruction does not reach adolescents previously defined as disadvantaged who have already established a negative attitude toward their own capabilities, school learning, teachers, and the rest. The kind of experiences that are offered, the motivational devices used, the content, as well as the approaches to teaching, seem somehow to miss the mark. This is because they are incompatible with the needs of such students and, therefore, represent meaningless drudgery to them, or because some link in their

education is missing. Motivating devices are needed to break these attitudes and to engage the student in the learning process.

A technique is neither good nor bad, per se, but its effectiveness will depend upon the situation in which it is used, the purpose for which it is used, and the subsequent use made of the results. Coverage is a problem of an instructional program for the disadvantaged. Because of many deficits in content background, in the reading and linguistic ability of these students, their power to absorb new content is low.

Long-term topics that are broken down into a series of short sequences is a framework that recognizes a short attention span. One way of doing this is through individualized instruction. Through this, a student can progress at his own rate and provide some level of achievement.

Perhaps one of the greatest stumbling blocks to learning in the traditional scheme of instruction is the lack of individualization of learning and the imposition of standardized expectations regarding performance.

Primarily, individualized instruction involves an organization of instruction around ideas and concepts large enough to permit open-ended and varied approaches

so that each individual can respond to the task in terms of his particular concern and according to his level of perception, performance, and skill.

Movement in an individualized instruction system must be in accordance with the readiness of students and the level of difficulty. This approach to teaching is also referred to as prescription learning which is suited to the individual and to his needs.

The use of programmed material is sometimes included in individualized instruction, but it should be pointed out that programmed material is merely a tool to be used, whereas individualized instruction is an entire approach. In programmed instruction, the individual responds to one frame of material at a time and is constantly checked to see if he is giving correct responses. While programming is not designed to replace teachers, it can facilitate learning. One can use programming to avoid the frustration of constant failure which some pupils experience under conventional forms.

Another approach to teaching the disadvantaged student is grouping; that is, placing students in classes based on one or more criteria. Many times, achievement is the basis of this. Grouping can expedite learning and

make the act of teaching more efficient. Grouping can be done in a special class composed only of disadvantaged students which would be homogeneous. Grouping can also be achieved within a regular class as a small segment, which is heterogeneous grouping or mainstreaming of students into a setting composed also of the advantaged students. These small groups provide opportunity for mutual respect and admiration as they work closely with their group on a common problem. It also gives members who shy away from participation in large group discussion an opportunity to develop self confidence through interaction with fewer people on an informal level.

Three other techniques familiar to all have been especially helpful in teaching disadvantaged students. Resource people in the community with whom students are familiar can be invited into the classroom. The disadvantaged learn through the experiences of the resource person, thus, providing a worthy job identification model. For the students who find reading a meager source of information because of reading difficulties, observations and interviewing are important additional sources of information. Dramatization or role-playing is a way of creating, identifying and clarifying conflicting views and feelings.

The preceding teaching techniques can be effective in almost any curriculum. In the vocational-technical area, there exist programs that lend themselves to dealing with problems of the disadvantaged.

Occupational programs, especially designed to deal with these problems and supply the student with marketable skills, broaden their experiences and develop attitudes which will make their successful adjustment to life in the family and community easier for themselves and the people with whom they live and work. In general, occupational programs can bring needed improvements in personal efficiency, social adaptability, acceptability and occupational competencies to the disadvantaged.

An increasingly popular form of vocational experience used by schools--particularly where large numbers of disadvantaged students are involved--is the "work-study" program. For some schools, the solution to failure with some students seems to be to put them out to work for part of the day. Certainly, it is not a solution unless the program is properly operated. If the disadvantaged student is compelled to take a low-order occupation which is limited in terms of career opportunities and reward, he can be sometimes locked into such a job for life.

There are desirable forms of work-study programs. The cooperative plans are good examples. In these cases, work and study are related and do reinforce one another. The focus is on a better general education for the pupil and a career, not just a job.

The disadvantaged pupil, more than most, wants to know and has a right to know the relevance of what he is taught and what he has learned. He cannot wait until he is older or until he becomes an adult to see the usefulness of what he has learned. He needs to know that early, to see tangibly that education makes sense in his world as well as in that of others.

EVALUATION

Why is evaluation an important part of any discussion about the effort to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged student? One reason for evaluation is the need for feedback in order to foster improvements in the program design and content. Another reason is the need to measure the success or failure of one program as compared to another in terms of cost effectiveness. The major reason in vocational education for evaluation of programs for the disadvantaged student is that it is mandated by federal law. I quote you the Federal Register, Volume 39, Number 143, Part III, page 27092: Vocational education programs and services for disadvantaged or handicapped persons shall be planned, developed, established, administered and EVALUATED by state boards and local educational agencies in consultation with advisory committees which include representatives of such persons; and in cooperation with other public or private agencies, organizations and institutions having responsibility for the education of disadvantaged or handicapped persons in the area or community served by such programs or services.

This discussion will center around evaluation of programs to meet the individual needs of the disadvantaged

student, not the instructional process. By special needs program, we are referring to a sequence of courses or classes which in total constitute a program of instruction for a special group of students.

Students with special needs are not new to education. Generally speaking, it is safe to assume that all students in all programs have special needs. However, our interest as vocational educators specifically recognizes special needs as very specific needs which normally cannot be met with traditional educational programs.

Special needs programs, by the very nature of the students they serve, will tend to be offered in urban localities. The larger the school district, the more likely it will find a class size group of disadvantaged students.

The success of the programs for the disadvantaged students is measured by evaluation on the local, state, and national levels. In many school districts the evaluation of the programs for the disadvantaged student is based on their scores on national achievement tests. While these tests do measure to some extent the relative improvement of these students from one test to another, they only show at best a partial indication of the

benefits of the program. Oftentimes, these tests are a source of frustration and disappointment to the student who is disadvantaged. They may even have the negative influence of lowering the self concept of the disadvantaged student even further.

While there are many positive aspects of using the nationally normed achievement test as a measure of program effectiveness, they have many inherent shortcomings and cannot be used by themselves to measure the successfulness of a particular program.

There appears to be more appropriate criteria for evaluating the special needs programs. The criteria are as follows:

1. retention power
2. attendance
3. improved self concept
4. employability
5. follow up

Retention power. Does a particular program decrease the drop-out rate? What percentage? Retention power is an important measure of program relevance from the student's point of view.

Attendance. Does a particular program decrease the absenteeism rate? What percentage? Attendance is another important measure of program relevance from the student's point of view.

Improved self concept. Do the students in these special needs programs eventually see themselves as important, worthwhile individuals? Self concept is probably the one aspect of individual development which most influences a person's success in life. Research indicates that a positive self concept correlates positively with success in a school environment.

Employability. Does the special needs program equip the student with the attitude, skills, and knowledge necessary for entry level positions in the occupation for which they have been trained?

Follow up. What percentage of the students completing a special needs program are contributing members of society? A large percentage of the students who can be classified as disadvantaged and do not participate in a special needs program go on to become a burden on society. Therefore, a valid measurement of special needs programs is participation in the labor force in one's chosen field.

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There is an extensive need as well as a professional responsibility for the development and implementation of evaluative techniques for special needs programs. Let us not make the mistake of evaluating special needs programs with standardized testing.

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